

What is claimed is:

1. A method of managing a data access system for transferring data between a server system and a plurality of user sites upon request from said user sites and wherein at least a subset of said user sites comprise performance monitoring agents capable of calculating and transmitting performance data indicative of the data transfer performance of data access systems, said method comprising the steps of:
  - receiving performance data transmitted from said performance monitor agents;
  - selecting a quantity of data received;
  - summarizing the quantity of data received; and
  - storing said summarized quantity of data into a database.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the quantity of data selected represents performance of the data access system for a specific time interval.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the time interval is 15 minutes.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the performance data includes a timestamp means identifying a time when the performance data was observed and wherein the step of selecting comprises collecting data that was observed during the same time interval.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising, before the receiving step, the steps of receiving data indicative of the performance of a plurality of data access systems from said performance monitoring agents; and filtering said data received to pertain to a selected data access system.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the performance data is correlated to factors of interest.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the server system comprises at least one Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) server.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the performance data comprises a summary of performance metrics for a HTTP page.

9. The method of claim 1 further including the step of using the stored summarized data as a basis for ascertaining quality of service conditions of said data access system.

10. The method of claim 1 further including the step of calculating further summarized data using said stored summarized data.

11. A performance management system for managing a data access system for transferring data between a server system and a plurality of user sites upon request from said user sites and wherein at least a subset of said user sites comprise performance monitoring agents capable of calculating and transmitting performance data indicative of the performance of data access systems, said performance management system comprising:

- means for receiving data indicative of the performance of the data access system transmitted from said performance monitor agents;
- means for selecting a quantity of data received;
- means summarizing the quantity of data received;
- means for storing said summarized quantity of data into a database; and
- means for utilizing said the stored summarized data as a basis for ascertaining quality of service conditions of said data access system.